



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Kevin Kerstein
Publicity Manager
Churchill Downs Racetrack
(610) 420-6971 (mobile)
(502) 635-4712 (office)
Kevin.Kerstein@KyDerby.com

MR. BIG NEWS WORKS HALF-MILE IN :50.40 FOR PREAKNESS STAKES

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Friday, Sept. 25, 2020) – Allied Racing Stable's Kentucky Derby (Grade I) third-place finisher **Mr. Big News** finalized his major preparation for the \$1 million Preakness Stakes (GI) on Saturday, Oct. 3 with a half-mile move in :50.40 Friday morning at Churchill Downs.

Mr. Big News, a last minute entry in the \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve, worked with regular exercise rider **Tony Camacho** in the saddle through splits of :13.20 and :25.40 with a five-furlong gallop out of 1:03.20, according to Churchill Downs clocker **John Nichols**.

"He left the pole really strong, which is how he was working before the Derby," trainer **Bret Calhoun** said. "We only wanted an easy work and I told Tony to go in :49 or :50 and gallop out well. He's been fit after just running in the Derby and it's been very promising how strong he's acting in his works after the race."

Mr. Big News, a bay colt by Giant's Causeway, earned an automatic spot into the Preakness by winning Oaklawn's \$200,000 Oaklawn Stakes on April 11. The two-time winner is scheduled to ship to Pimlico on Tuesday.

Chester Thomas' Allied Racing Stable will attempt to get one of their other stable stars, **Mr. Money**, back on track Saturday in the \$100,000 Ack Ack (GIII). Mr. Money, who is co-owned by **Spendthrift Farm**, is a four-time Grade III winner but has not won since July 2019.

"The good news is we know how much he likes this track at Churchill," Calhoun said. "He had some things not go his way so far this year. I don't think he liked the surface at Oaklawn (in the April 11 Oaklawn Mile) and race at Keeneland (a 6 1/2-furlong allowance on July 12) didn't really suit him either."

The complete field for the Ack Ack in order of post position (with jockey, trainer and morning line odds): **Warrior's Charge** (Florent Geroux, Brad Cox, 9-5); **Bourbon Calling** (Brian Hernandez Jr., Ian Wilkes, 12-1); **Proverb** (Adam Beschizza, Richard Baltas, 30-1); **American Anthem** (James Graham, Mike Maker, 5-1); Mr. Money (Gabriel Saez, Calhoun, 6-1); **Pioneer Spirit** (David Cohen, Robertino Diodoro, 12-1); **Alkhaatam** (Declan Cannon, Danny Peitz, 20-1); **Ebben** (Corey Lanerie, Steve Margolis, 5-1); **Bankit** (Ricardo Santana Jr., Steve Asmussen, 10-1); **Thirstforlife** (Chris Landeros, Wes Hawley, 30-1); **Dinar** (Rafael Bejarano, Cherie DeVaux, 30-1); **Home Base** (Joe Rocco Jr., Mike Tomlinson, 30-1); and **Everfast** (Julien Leparoux, Jack Siston 10-1).

Saturday's Ack Ack is carded as Race 9 with a post time of 4:53 p.m. (all times Eastern). The 10-race program has a first post of 12:45 p.m. The Ack Ack could serve as a prep for the \$1 million Breeders' Cup Big Ass Fans Dirt Mile (GI), which will be run six weeks later on Nov. 7 at Keeneland.

CHURCHILL DOWNS PARTNERS WITH NYRA FOR CROSS-COUNTRY PICK 5 ON SATURDAY – Churchill Downs and the New York Racing Association will partner for a cross-country Pick 5 opportunity on Saturday.

The 50-cent minimum wager will feature three graded stakes events, including the \$100,000 Ack Ack (GIII) in Race 9 at Churchill Downs. Wagering will be available on ADW platforms including www.TwinSpires.com.

Saturday's Cross Country Pick 5 Sequence:

- Leg A: Belmont Race 7 (4:08 p.m.)
- Leg B: Churchill Race 8 (4:21 p.m.)
- Leg C: Belmont Race 8 – Grade III Nobel Damsel (4:42 p.m.)
- Leg D: Churchill Race 9 – Grade III Ack Ack (4:53 p.m.)
- Leg E: Belmont Race 9 – Grade II Vosburgh (5:14 p.m.)

DOWN THE STRETCH – The 20-cent Single 6 Jackpot was hit Thursday for the tune of \$49,596.42. ... Friday's 10-race card at Churchill Downs had a first post of 12:45 p.m. The temporary rail was taken down on the Matt Winn Turf Course and racing will take place in Lane 1 for the remainder of the meet. ... **Joel Politi's** 2019 Kentucky Oaks (GI) winner and recent Derby City Distaff (GI) runner-up **Serengeti Empress** worked a half-mile in :48.60 Friday morning. She is targeting the \$1 million Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint (GI) on Nov. 7 at Keeneland. ... Churchill Downs on TV: Friday, **FS2**, 12:30-6 p.m.; Saturday, **FS1**, 12:30-1:30 p.m., **FS2**, 1:30-6 p.m.; and Sunday, **FS2**, 12:30-6 p.m. ... "Inside Churchill Downs" will air Friday at 6 p.m. on **ESPN 680/105.7**. Those outside the Louisville area can listen on www.espnlouisville.com. ... For more information on the September Meet, visit www.churchilldowns.com/handicapping.

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